In Memoriam

Dr. Andrew Scott Cohen
(1954-2025)

It is with a heavy heart that we report that Andrew S. Cohen passed away in Tucson, Arizona, on February 5, 2025 at the age of 70, surrounded by his beloved family—wife Debbie and twin sons, Alexander and Zachary, and his brother Steve.

A native of Trenton New Jersey, Andy earned his bachelor's degree in 1976 at Middlebury College, where he first learned about lakes. He went on to graduate school at the University of California, Davis, where he got his PhD in 1982, doing ground-breaking work on Lake Turkana with his project entitled: *Ecological and Paleoecological Aspects of the Rift Valley Lakes of East Africa*. His initial publications from this work included the seminal Cohen et al. (1983) Lacustrine Paleochemical Interpretations Based on East and South African Ostracodes, *Paleogeog., Paleoclim., Paleoecol*. 43: 129-151. He would spend the rest of his career focusing on understanding the paleoenvironments of the East African rift, much of that work utilizing ostracodes and other invertebrates.

Andy's first academic job was as an Assistant Professor at Colorado College (1982-1986). He left to join the faculty at the University of Arizona, where he spent the next 39 years as a Distinguished Professor in the Department of Geosciences, with a joint appointment in the Department of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology. At Arizona, he advised 14 PhD, 11 MS students, and numerous undergraduates. He was recognized with many honors, including as a University of Arizona Galileo Circle Fellow, AGU Fellow, GSA Fellow, as well as with the International Association of Limnogeology (IAL) Wilmot Bradley Medal, the GSA Limnogeology Division Israel Russell Award, and the University of Arizona Foundation Leicester and Kathryn Sherrill Award for Creative Teaching. Andy's academic record is evidence of his profound impact on the field, including over 185 peer-reviewed publications (13,957 total citations and an h-index of 61), a seminal book published in 2003, *Paleolimnology. History and Evolution of Lake Systems.* Oxford Univ. Press, 500pp., as well as numerous authorships of white papers on continental drilling, human evolution, and biodiversity in Lake Tanganyika.

Andy has been a cornerstone in the development of scientific lake drilling and the discipline's most vocal champion. He led or co-led three major drilling projects: the GLAD development and testing project at Great Salt Lake, the Lake Malawi Drilling Project, and the Hominin Sites and Paleolakes Drilling Project (HSPDP). Through those projects, he coordinated and trained hundreds of scientists, profoundly influencing the careers and lives of many and bringing together researchers from multiple disciplines and

countries. Undertaking such monumental projects requires immense patience, perseverance, and dedication—qualities that Andy exemplified throughout his career.

Andy was awarded 25 US National Science Foundation research grants. In 1997, his Research Experience for Undergraduates award led to the creation of the Nyanza Project on Lake Tanganyika, which initiated a decade-long training program of over 100 students from both the U.S. and Africa, many of whom have gone on to make significant contributions to limnological and paleolimnological research.

Andy's pioneering work in Africa and around the world has been fundamental to advancing our understanding of the interactions among climate, ecosystems, and humans. He also has been a leader in lake management and conservation, particularly with respect to Lake Tanganyika. Even in 2024, while battling cancer, Andy continued to work diligently, with his latest research focusing on circulation in Lake Tanganyika and how a warming world might affect this vital food source for millions of Africans. He worked indefatigably, until his illness precluded such work, to advance projects still in the mill, and ensure his samples and analyses were disposed in a manner to enable others to continue the work.

In addition to his core African research, Andy was truly a Renaissance scientist and greatly enjoyed applying his insights to various geological and ecological problems, authoring articles from ancient lake systems in South America's Pantanal and Argentina, to the paleoecology and geochemical records from the Bouse Formation of the American Southwest. He explored fossil tracks in Tanzania, mercury contamination in modern lakes, and even experimental studies on fossil preservation under acid rain scenarios. Andy's curiosity and creativity knew no continental bounds. His scholarship reflected a rare breadth, bridging paleolimnology, tectonics, conservation biology, and human evolution, always with an eye toward how ancient records speak to modern planetary change.

Beyond his wide-ranging research, Andy was an affable, generous, and deeply committed mentor, devoted to fostering the next generation of geoscientists—especially those from underrepresented backgrounds. He was particularly proud of his role in founding and leading the aforementioned Nyanza Project. Later in his career, he channeled the same vision into Clouds to Core (C2C), an NSF-funded project at the University of Arizona that brought community college and tribal college students from across the state—Yuma to Show Low to Flagstaff—into the fold of cutting-edge geoscience research. Whether in the field, the lab, or the classroom, Andy believed science belonged to everyone. His enduring legacy is not only in the hundreds of papers and paleoclimate reconstructions he leaves behind, but also in the curiosity he kindled and the doors he opened for so many.

Andy was a trailblazer, a visionary, and a dedicated community leader whose legacy will continue to inspire us for years to come. A keen observer of the natural world with an insatiable curiosity, he was a true scientist's scientist—conducting himself with integrity and always sharing a good dose of laughter. He even had several species named in his honor: an ostracode *Gomphocythere coheni* (Park and Martens, 2001) and a diatom *Lindavia cohenii* (Mohan et al., 2016), with several ostracodes and gastropods on their way. His students, mentees, as well as numerous colleagues and friends from around the world sadly mourn his loss.

Respectfully Submitted—Lisa Park Boush (UofA PhD-1995), Michael McGlue (UofA PhD-2011), and Kaustubh Thirumalai (UofA colleague since 2019)